Chirping From The Nest

Rose McGovern

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Chirping From the Nest

Rose McGovern

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Chirping From the Nest

A lover of art, with timid steps I come
To where the myriad candles pierce the gloom;
Sated my soul, with rare incense and perfume,
My heart, with maddening rapture, almost numb.
A sacred quiet prevails, my lips are dumb
And obdurate; 'tis in vain I bid them say
The words prepared so carefully yesterday:—
That I fain would linger here 'till life is done.

Frail, indeed, is the offering that I dare
To place, O Art, before thy glorious shrine,
So many priceless gifts have been offered there,
But I've loved so much, so long, reject not mine,
And I will but live to make thy throne more fair,
But live for thee, for I am forever thine.

R. M.

Nocturnal Song.

All the night, crape-wrapt and shrouded,
Starless, moonless, phantom-crowded;
Wild, with culprit winds that rioted and frolicked wantonly;
Sang a bird voice, clear, unbroken,
Just outside my window, open,
From the branches, sturdy, oaken, of the leaf encumbered tree,
Sang in accents, ripp'ling, silvern, all the livelong night to me.

In my dreams restless and haunted,
Canny, ghostly, shadow-daunted;
Fraught with visions strange and fearful, inexplicable to me;
Like the limpid, dovelike cooing
Of a stream thro' woodlands flowing
Or a lost wind idly blowing down old ways of mystery,
Did I hear the ebbing, swelling of that tide of melody.

Out of sleep, awake I started,
Wide-eyed listened, rapture hearted,
Struck with wonder deep and fervent thus to hear at midnight's shrine,
Thro' the blackness gladly trilling,
Soul-inspiring and nerve-thrilling,
Heaven-born and glory-filling, that sweet voice supreme, divine,
Singing in the night's wild fury, with a courage most sublime.

From my eyelids drooping, dreary
Fled the shade of slumber, weary;
And with strong, impatient fervor that was not to be denied,
I in deepest, fullest accord,
Crept noiselessly and all unheard,
Lured onward by that song and bird, to the casement, swinging wide
Leaned far out into the darkness heard the elements' mad ride.

Heard the elements' wild raging,
Heard the war that earth was waging,
Winds let loose from nature's power, rains that splashed upon the sod;
But above it all the singing
Rose from branches tossing, swinging,
O'er the tumult clearly ringing like a message from the God,
Sweet enough to stir with gladness hearts e'en lifeless as a clod.

Straightway I forgot the storming,
In my veins the blood went warming,
Rose my spirit, rapt with music, o'er the blackness of the night;
Round my heart flow'r wreaths were twining,
It was day, the sun was shining,
And the darkness and the whining, all were merged in dazzling light,
And my soul fled from my keeping, soared unto the summits bright.

Long I leaned there hesitating,
Deeply pond'ring, meditating,
Learning from that song a lesson I shall never more forget;
Ah! I thought, how oft I'd rested
Safely hid, all unmolested,
While the wind fury-invested raved around and madly swept;
When I might have cheered the darkness like a vagrant I have slept.

Thanks, thanks, thou midnight singer lone,
For thou hast brought the lesson home,
Never more in life I'll waver or shrink from duty's call;
Tho' wind and storm rave all around me,
From my tottering, swaying tree,
Happiest songster, just like thee, I shall sing in spite of all,
Give to cheer, my little portion, tho' that portion may be small.

God Made the World for Me.

Ho! Spring is here with zest and cheer,
The skies above bend blue,
From voiceless clod to realms of God,
Old earth is born anew.
Now palpitant with robins' chant
And thrushes tremolo,
Throbs fast the air, lo! everywhere
Green verdure starts to show.

My hearts' as wild as any child,
Just like the winds that come
Like love's own breath, to wake from death
The frozen, cold and numb.
Deep in my veins confusion reigns
And I am glad and free,
For I tell you believe 'tis true
God made the world for me.

Yes, for my eyes He bent the skies,
Molded this earthly sphere,
Cast it afar, 'twixt orb and star
To whirl on year by year.
For me He flings, for me He swings
The censer lights that shine;
For me He trails thro' woodland vales
The rivers silvery line.

For me, His hand has decked the land
And piled the hills on high;
To make me dream the sunset scheme
Glows in the western sky.
For me you know, the dew-drops glow,
The violet droops its head,
For me the sun gold webs hath spun,
For me the rose is red.

You ask me why the God on high,
The Master should bestow
From His white throne on one alone
The beauty here below.
Tho' strange it seems to human beings,
Still I assert, proclaim,
That skies are blue for me, not you,
For me alone stars reign.

For 'neath the sun there is no one
In climate far and near,
Who dreams the dreams or sees the scenes,
Or hears the things I hear.
And ev'ry word that God unheard
Has writ in tree or flow'r,
I read aright, for man's delight,
To show His love and pow'r.
And that is why the God on high,
All kind and graciously
In space has whirled this wondrous world
And given it to me.

So day may wane and night may reign
And clouds bedark the air,
The winds may crash and rain-drops splash,
I heed it not nor care.
For blood is red and swift the tread,
When youth is glad and free,
'Tis life's springtime, the world is mine,
God made it all for me.

A Wail from the Depths.

Maybe somewhere the skies are clear,
Somewhere, perhaps roses bloom,
Maybe somewhere birds are singing,
Maybe somewhere it is June.

But we in the din and tumult,
We, the reeking, crowded herds,
What do we know of the roses,
What do we know of the birds.

Does ever a bud or blossom
Or a June-tide glow for us,
Do we ever pause to admire
The maidenly rose-buds blush?

For we are earth's little-gifted,
The stupid, the brainless crew,
Unconscious of joy in nature,
Blind to the bliss of the blue.

Does blood that is pale with hunger
Be filled with a love of art,
Can the gleam of a star or flow'r
Bring dreams to a bitter heart?

Can the sunset's gorgeous colors
Set brains that are dead on fire,
Enthuse our shrunk souls with rapture,
Low lives with a high desire?

Maybe somewhere it is summer,
Maybe somewhere it is June,
But we the lowly must labor
And live in the deepest gloom.

Somewhere the fortunate revel
In the world God made for men;
They say we are blind and bestial,
Say we are none of their kin.

Somewhere there are children happy,
And ours are but soulless things,
Brainless and bereft of laughter
By care that poverty brings.

O God in a world of pleasure
What moments have we to play,

And here are our souls neglected,
For what heart have we to pray?

Here are the children You gave us,
And here are our squalid dens;
We're kept in the mire forever,
We die where our life begins.

We who have bartered our children's
And our own honor for bread;
Who shrink from the hell of living,
Shrink from the hell of the dead.

Lashed close to the wheel of slav'ry,
Bred up in the haunts of sin,
You ask why our souls are stupid,
You ask why our brains are dim.

Barred out from your halls and temples
Because we are soiled with mud,
You ask why our hearts are vicious,
You ask why we thirst for blood.

Maybe somewhere the skies are blue,
Somewhere, perhaps, roses bloom,
Maybe somewhere birds are singing,
Maybe somewhere it is June.

But we in the dust and clamor,
We, the sweat-drenched, weary herds,
What do we know of the roses?
What do we know of the birds?

O what was our crime, great Master?
Aye, what was our wrong or sin,
That our days should be days of sorrow,
Our lives so dark and dim?

O why should we have no talents?
Why should we possess no brains?
And why should we get the drudgery
And the others get the gains?

We know not which way to journey,
Know not what to dare or do,
Black-souled in death's dark hour,
God, what shall we say to You.

We who are bearing no treasures
Or banners or sheaves of wheat,
But bodies and souls frayed and wasted
In a struggle for food to eat.

O God, when You come to judge us,
We shrink, yet we hope and trust.
Thou know'st the odds we were fighting,
Thou knowest we know Thou art just.

Nature Love.

Oh! my heart and soul delights,
In fair nature's lovely sights,
And I am mighty glad to live, to love and dream;
For there's joy intense, untold,
In each tint of red or gold,
In every blooming flower and starry beam.

O my spirit soars and sings
At the upward flash of wings,
Far above me, into the blue mists of the sky,
And my eyes will never tire
Of the sunset's rainbow fire,
Or of eastern splendor when the dawn is drawing nigh.

There is rapture in the stream,
Singing, whisp'ring, in its dream,
A wondrous glory in the waterfall's mad dash;
And the foaming of the wave
Makes my spirit, O so brave,
How it warms my blood to hear the wind's wild crash!

O, I joy to watch twilight
Deepen into darker night,
And to see the dewdrops glisten on the flowers;
And my soul is glad to hear,
O'er the meadows, crystal, clear,
The dulcet chime of bells, in distant convent tow'rs.

There is beauty in the stars,
And the moonlight fleecy bars,
That thrills my soul, with a happiness, divine;
And the starlight agleaming,
Far sends, my heart adreaming
To some beauteous, angel-peopled height sublime.

O I never do feel sad,
And I never am so glad
As when the gentle buds and blossoms are in bloom,
When the lily and the rose
And the humble violet grows
And the air is heavily freighted with perfume.

It is then I like to stray
Down the wooded rugged way,
Where kindly Mother Nature rules with wondrous art;
O the joy to scan and trace
In each childlike flower-face
The clear reflection of a pure and stainless heart.

And tho' others grieve and sigh
When the tender blossoms die,
When summer time begins to wane and groweth old;
It is then my eye delights
In the gorgeous hues and sights
And I love the Autumn forest's bright gleaming gold.

Even in the summer's death,
Even in the winter's wrath,
Even in the wind's wild fury or winter snow,
There is beauty half divine,
There are lessons most sublime,
Lessons every human heart should read and know.

O I love Thee, Nature queen,
With my heart and soul supreme,
And all ardently I worship before thy shrine,
For I know it is thy voice
Makes my heart and soul rejoice,
That thy rich plentitude of glory all is mine.

Who is there who'd grieve or sigh,
Who is there who'd long to die,
With the earth so filled with beauty and with love;
For this world with joy is rife,
And most beautiful is life,
If we would only trust the Father up above.

Sing, my heart, in cheer tonight
That my eyes can see the light,
And that my soul can drink the beauty on life's way;
For 'tis good to hope, forgive,
It is joy to love and live
In this grand and glorious world of ours today.

The World's Way.

You tell me that in the past now vanished,
In days departed, days forever fled,
Your heart was broken, life's joy was banished,
That there your young life's dream lies cold and dead;
With a white pained face you sit there sighing,
Yes, sit there sadly and you dream the while
Of that past grave where life's hope is lying,
You speak of it to me, and yet I smile.

'Tis an old story your heart is crying,
And a common drama rehearsed by all;
But 'tis the world's way to laugh in dying,
To laugh and be merry whate'er befall.
What fev'rish folly to sit there dreaming
Of a sorrow past and a lost delight,
While the future's rich red wine is streaming,
While the Star of Hope is shining bright.

What use to sigh while the world rejoices,
For it heeds thee not but to mock thy groans,
And exultantly its heartless voices
Will pit'less laugh to scorn thy tears and moans.
Arise with others and hide your sorrow
Behind a face that's all a cheerful smile;
Laugh on and live for a hopeful morrow,
Laugh and live tho' your heart be dead the while.

Temptation.

Above my head the clouds loom deep and black,
The night is coming, fast recedes the day,
Upon the chasm's verge, trembling, I pause;
And God, my God, seemeth so far away.

So far away across the gloom of night,
No more mine eyes can see a gleam of light,
Or my heart feel His presence, sweet delight.

How long can I wait here in darkness alone,
With freezing veins, and fearful, lagging steps?
How long before the reeling earth gives way
And lets me plunge into the awful depths?

How long before the clouds unchecked will shed
Their rain and storm on my unsheltered head
And beat me to the dust beneath their tread?

Not long, e'en now the raindrops start to fall,
From cavern depths strange voices to me call,
And night intense and deep, broods over all.

Why is it thus, why did my footsteps stray,
While others o'er the bright-lit paths move on?
Will those black clouds above me ne'er disperse,
And will this darkness never end in dawn?

Why is it thus, O God why didst Thou go
And leave me to the winds and depths below,
The dark, abysmal depths my soul dreads so?

Where art Thou in this hour, my hour of grief,
Great King, Who gave me life, Who died for me;
Thou, Who for love of this frail heart endured
The passion and deep woe of Calvary?

Where art Thou, Lamb, for me blood-drenched and slain,
Thou Who hast known all sorrow and all pain?
Shall all this Goodness bleed and die in vain?

Alas! out of the night there comes to me,
"Thou hast forsook the path He marked for thee;
"Thou art the recreant child, all goodness He."

Thou art all goodness, yes, all mercy, too,
Unto Thy hands I trust this will of mine;
Come to me here, for I am weak and faint,
Dispel the gloom and let the fair stars shine.

Come to me in the darkness of the night
With all Thy strong and deep-enduring grace;
Come, for abysmal voices call to me,
Come ere I fall into that dark embrace.

With all my strength, O God, where e'er Thou be,
Out of the utmost depths I cry to Thee,
Victim of Calvary, come, O come to me.

Genius.

The crown of genius is too oft a crown of thorns,
Each piercing deep into the throbbing brain;
Thrice crucified is he who feels its weight,
He knows all passion depths, the dregs of pain.

Like Him of old Who died on Calvary,
He pours his precious blood, empties his heart
Upon a world of stone, gives all in all
Only to hear the jeering mob depart.

He has his hours of agony and thirst,
And drinks the gall-filled cup the hating throng
Holds to his lips, unflinching, for there's One
Who gives him strength divine, and he is strong.

He has his hours of agony, and when
Death comes with kindly hand to end it all
The worlds that mocked and oft derided him,
Above his lonely sepulcher adoring fall.

Monastery Bells.

In the west, rose-hued and blushing,
Wine-steeped, paint-daubed, crimson flushing,
Full of magic incantation, full of wonder, mystery,
Fades the long day, worn and weary,
Leaves the world to darkness dreary,
Darkness somber, sable,death-like, full of weird solemnity.

For a moment, falt'ring, quiv'ring,
One last ray thro' darkness shiv'ring
And the Monarch of the Heavens in another world resides;
Then I bend mine ear to listen,
While the stars above me glisten,
And the moon resplendent, lustrous, from her western palace glides.

Bend mine ear to listen quietly,
As I pause to listen nightly,
For a strain of dulcet music long familiar unto me,
Charged with rapture, wondrous, fearful,
Holy, solemn, joyful, tearful,
Bringing to the rustic toilers messages of joy to be.

O'er the lonesome woodlands, slowly,
O'er the desert valleys, lowly,
Swelling to a strong symphony, dying to a plaintive throb,
Now a requiem 'tis singing,
Now a tale of old 'tis ringing,
Now it is a note of laughter, now a stifled, repressed sob.

Far across the meadows sloping,
Thro' the night my heart goes groping,
Groping to a grey-walled Abbey, prominent against the sky;

Prominent, supreme and stately,
Rearing up sober, sedately,
In its cold, forbidding grandeur, proof against all worldly cry.

Silent when the world is raving,
Cheating, striving, toiling, craving,
Peaceful in the heated clamor, in the tumult and the blare,
Heedless of the worldly teeming,
Heedless of the shams and scheming,
In those walls a heaven is reigning, heav'n born of praise and prayer.

From that tower, upward rearing,
When the death of day is nearing,
And the darkness comes from mansions where the black-robed Goddess dwells,
I can hear that deep-toned ringing,
Graceful, tuneful, throbbing, swinging,
Music stirring, heart-felt, blissful, of those Monastery Bells.

Always when the dawn is trembling
On earth's edge, her light assembling,
Piercing thro' the deeps and thickets, crevices and vales and dells,
I am roused from slumber's dreaming
By the clear persistent teeming,
By the echoes godly, holy of those Monastery Bells.

Pause and listen to their quav'ring,
To each note so strong, unwav'ring,
Pause and tell me what they're chiming so intense and fervently;
Is it of the present flying,
Or the days before us lying,
That they chant in alien accent a mystic prophecy?

Is it of the ages olden,
That they speak in language golden,
Of red wars and coward traitors, monarchs heartless and unjust?
Do they tell of monasticism,
Clan and sect and feudalism,
When the blood of faithful martyrs stained a deep dark red the dust?

Do they sing of brave crusaders,
Vandals lawless, vile marauders,
Do they tell of lord and vassal and of knights of chivalry,
Do they tell of tournament,
Victories, triumphs, heaven-sent,
Do they sing of ancient cities and of lands beyond the sea?

Bells within your depths resounding,
Trembling, swelling, leaping, bounding,
I can hear the clash of battle and the bugles martial call;
I can hear the cries of terror,
Vict'ry won in spite of horror,
And the voice of God so mighty, strong, predominant o'er all.

I can read the olden story
Of God's Church, her wrongs and glory,
Glory that endures forever and forever it will last;
I can hear a small voice saying,
God still lives, He still is swaying,
He will triumph in the future, as He triumphed in the past.

Bells of morning, noon and evening,
Send your music clashing, cleaving,
Down earth's ev'ry nook and valley, into ev'ry clime and zone;

Tell the patient, toiling slowly
Up the hillside, tell the lowly,
That the God, Who reigns in Heaven, still looks down upon His own.

Tell the honored, tell the branded,
Tell the clean and the foul-handed,
Tell the ignorant and knowing, tell the mighty and the high,
That the King of might and power,
Still is Master of the hour,
Still He keeps guard o'er His people from that watch-tower in the sky.

Tell the penitent, heart moaning,
In sack-cloth and ashes groaning,
For the sins of reckless passion and the deeds of dark unright;
Tell him that the God is living,
Gentle, loving, and forgiving,
He will meet him, He will greet him, He will strive and make him white.

Ring across the moor and headland,
Thro' the thicket and the woodland,
To the hives of human toilers, tell the cities of the land
That the God, Who smote Gomorrah
And her sister unto sorrow,
Still has pow'r to crush another who is deaf to His command.

Bells of shadows, drooping, lifting,
Fifty years thro' life's scenes shifting,
Have yon hills, and plains, and valleys heard your paens and sad knells?

Fifty years your fervent chiming
Thrilled the heart whose day was dying,
Fifty years you've tolled your message, faithful Monastery Bells.

In the years before us looming,
Far or near, O bells, your tuning
Will go ringing thro' our heart-chords when the shades of twilight fall;
And 'twill set us meditating,
Pond'ring, musing, contemplating,
'Till each fibre of our being is wrapt up in holy thrall.

And again we will go groping
Far across the meadows sloping,
To that sober grey-walled Abbey on a gentle green-clad crest;
Once again behold that tower
Gilded in the sunset's dower,
Once again our hearts besoothed by the sense of peace and rest.

Bells of shadows, drooping, lifting,
Ever more thro' life's scenes shifting,
Just like the crystal air waves, that you have awakened into swells;
Ev'ry wave of thought emotion
You have stirred in life's heart-ocean
Will spread on and live forever, Happy Monastery Bells.

Out West.

Vague, indistinct, and gilded by romance,
As sunset gilds the river when at rest,
The dream of boyhood's adventurous heart,
The hope of bankrupt youth, supreme Out West.

Land of the greenest fields and bluest skies,
Where whirls the snow or rolls the golden seas,
Land of the reddest lips and brightest eyes,
Land of the unchecked sun and wanton breeze,
Land of the open plains and open ways,
Of lofty bold-browed mounts with icy crest,
Where Nature schemes to thrill and overcome
The trav'ler's heart with awe, superb Out West.

Land of the careless life, the free wild life,
Dare-devil deed and chivalrous enterprise,
Land of the wondrous cowboy and his herds,
Land where the gypsy roams and coyote cries.
Land, strange land, of the deep vast solitudes,
Land of the motley types, the worst and best,
Of long clear nights and the stars and plains,
Land of untrammeled flight, Out West, Out West.

Land of the stoutest hearts and strongest men,
Broad-chested, strong-muscled, our hope and stay,
Fused with spirit of plain and solid hills,
Masters of toil and brawn and dare are they.
Land of the lonely life, the rugged way,
Land of the hardship, toil and crucial test,
Land of the brave, strong mothers, truest loves,
Land of storied romance, peerless Out-West.

That Dear Old Town.

In that dear old town the sun goes down
Tonight just as of old;
I can see the glow as long ago
Of hues both red and gold;
That dear old town I love it so.

As if in a dream I see the green
Where often times I played,
The shady wood where the old church stood,
Where oft in youth I prayed;
These thoughts of old they do me good.

From the old church tow'r this twilight hour
The bell rings on the air;
I can hear that strain, almost again,
For I know 'tis ringing there;—
O the past is gone and regret vain.

Down all life's ways thro' the mist and haze
I seem to ever hear
The ebb and swell of that dear bell,
Its music soft and clear,
'Twill ring till death and then, ah well!

Perhaps my eyes from the vaulted skies
May oft look gladly down
On the winding streams and the sunset scenes
And lights of that old town,
Where once I dreamed my childhood dreams.

One Who Sang.

A vein of intense joy ran thro' his lines,
A spell of keenest mirth, of gayety,
No shadow but all mellow, glad sunshine,
That lured our souls to dreams of ecstasy;
And as I read oft times I've thought some hand
Gifted by heav'n had caught from woodland shade
The notes of some rich-throated songster-band,
Transformed them into words of hope, that made

All things on earth more beautiful and glad;
And so one day my heart began to long
For just one glimpse of him, whose music had
Filled all my life with mirth, with joy and song.

For oh, how glad and calm must be, I thought,
The face of him, who never sang of care,
The life of him whose fertile brain had wrought
All things that were most wonderful and fair.
But when in his retreat I stood, and found
No glimpse of perfect happiness, ah! no,
Nor glint of sunshine bright, but all around
Signs of struggle with penury and woe;

My eyes grew dim with burning unshed tears,
My soul so faint with grief scarce could I stand,
So much in life we ne'er can comprehend,
So much there is, we cannot understand;
For he who sang the livelong day of joy
And sweetest songs of gladness and of glee,
Was bowed with grief, his face was seamed with lines
Of bitter strife, despair and misery.

The Old Soldier.

There's only one thing can quicken
The slow blood in my veins,
'Tis the soldiers' tread
And the flag o'er head,
And the bugles clear, martial strains.

Then from my brow the frosts of age
Melt swift like winter's snow;
And my eyes grow bright
With the fire of fight,
And I live in the long ago.

O hopes of youth are long time spent,
And strength no longer mine;
But my dim eyes fill,
And my numb nerves thrill
At the sight of that blue clad line.

Now the cry and clash of battle
Are stilled, and freedom's breath
Blows over the land,
And the brave old band
Are joining the ranks of death.

But I'm sure one thing can summon
The life back to my veins,
'Tis the soldier's tread,
And the flag o'erhead,
And the bugle's triumphant strains.

Star of Hope.

O Star of Hope shine bright for those
Who mourn beside their dead;
Show them the path between the stars
That leads to Christ o'er head;
Shine for the lonely, loveless ones
Who walk their ways apart,
For those who toil down rugged roads
And know the aching heart.

Shine for the empty lives that ne'er
Have known love's tender pain;
For hearts that loved with truest love,
But loved alas in vain;

For lowly, struggling ones of earth,
The hardened hands that toil,
For lives bedarked by poverty,
By ceaseless care and moil.

Shine for the guiltless brow that wears
Another's brand of wrong,
The weaker one who patient bears
The burdens of the strong;
For the heart that strives and struggles
To heights supreme and grand,
Only to fail and fall just when
The prize is close at hand.

Shine on the dim, benighted mind
That gropes in darkest night;
Gleam where the shades of passion tense
Blind eyes unto the right;
Gleam on the hard unrighteous soul
Close chained in toils of sin,
Show him that Heart of kindest Love,
The God Who died for men.

Not in the mellow gold of day,
Not on hearts that are glad,
But shine through blackness of the night,
Shine on hearts that are sad.
Not for the saint with hallowed brow,
Or minds with knowledge bright,
But for the sinner, the ignorant,
Shine star with strongest light.

Hope.

Not the clouds or shades of the present,
Not the doubts or fears do I see;
Not the pall that darkens the day-light,
Or the gloom that envelops me.

But far on the slopes of the future,
The light of a star and the sign
That presages a glad tomorrow,
And joys that are yet to be mine.

The Dream of Julien Dubuque.

This is the dream he dreamed, who sleeps
In death's unbroken calm without the mart,
Upon a noble height where wild, free sweeps
Of winds, west-born, dear to his rugged heart,
Caress his lonely grave, and to him bear
The sad notturno of the mighty stream,
The stream he loved, that sings and sings fore'er
Of forest's pristine grandeur, camp-fire's gleam.
A joyous dream, what time the hills that rise
Broad, full-breasted, should clasp a city's form,
Throbbing with rich, red blood of enterprise,
With pride and courage, zest and vigor warm,
Unto their mother hearts, when primal vale
Should yield to human conquest and mandate,
And where the Savage lurked and carved his trail,
A city's venial stream should swift pulsate.

II.

This is the dream he dreamed, long days
Beside the river, days of perfectness,

When sunlight lost itself in untrod ways
And earth was fair in virgin loveliness;
When the myst'ry of ancient wilds, untamed,
Gave zest to life and made the blood fast flow,
When rugged hills and flood-worlds, all unchained,
Flourished in sturdy grandeur, youthful glow.
Days that he roamed afar, sought and explored
The heart of unknown vales, scaled lofty steeps,
Delved in the depths of earth, brought wealth, long stored
To light of day from dark, abysmal deeps.
Days when he lived with Nature, laughed in glee,
Heard her ev'ry heart-beat, drank from her veins
The spirit of the wood, untrammeled, free;
The spirit broad, of boundless hills and plains.
Days when winds of the east, winds of the west,
When the wail of river and woodland voice
Were pregnant with prophecies, hopeful, blest,
That thrilled his soul and made his heart rejoice.

III.

This is the dream he dreamed long nights,
Deep in the forest's still, somnific gloom;
As from the wigwam door he watched the lights
Flash far above, he heard the night-bird croon
Unto her young, and thought of his lost joys,
Of home delights, dead with his yesterday.
And ever he mused and listed to the noise
Of prophet tongues in sportive winds at play;
Sweeping across the level, open plain,
Or rustling in the frondage of the trees,
That swayed like some impassioned mortal frame,
Convulsed with grief or rage in fate's mad breeze.

Afar he heard the river, caught the gleam
Of opalescent waves, pearl-edged and clear,
With love intense, he loved the great, wide stream
In that vast calm, it was his solace, cheer.
How oft it sang to him as on it crept
Along its course, 'twixt banks alternate low,
Then steep and high, or else anon it slept,
'Mid fertile plains, where lily-lined and slow
It reveled 'mid Arcadian dells then fast,
By city gates and country hamlets fair,
Until in greater deeps 'tis lost at last,
Is lost in the gulf's broad expanse fore'er.
Sang of a far-off world, of brighter skies,
Of flow'r, vine, rich fruitage, sunnier lands,
Mirth and music, gleam of flashing eyes,
The clasp, the vibrant thrill of meeting hands.
Sang of a heartless woman's deep deceit,
Of youth's strong passion, unrequited, vain;
Then hate, renunciation and retreat
From social haunts, to wood and field and plain.
Sang of the old love, false, sang of the darling new
Love of the madd'ning stir of liberty,
Sang of the vision far that held his view,
Sang of triumph hid in futurity.

IV.

This is the dream he dreamed alway
By the camp fire's lurid and flick'ring flame,
Until his moody heart grew glad and gay,
Until his blood ran riot in each vein.
He saw beyond the mists and battle-fires
On the slopes of seven hills, tow'r-topped, supreme,
Tier upon tier, a city's roofs and spires
Loom up against the blue of skies, serene.

And gleaming in the sunset's final ray,
Religion's blest retreats, white shining walls,
Thrones where proud knowledge held her regal sway,
Where science and art kept court in classic halls.
He saw those marble founts with master care
Reared by the hands of Prelates mitre-crowned,
Purple-robed, godly shepherds, fountains where
The tired souls might well appease and drown
In waters cool, aye evermore might still
Their thirst divine, where plastic minds of youth
Could sip the precious draught, could drink their fill
Of life's nectar, eternal life, in truth.
He saw the patriot sons, he heard their names
Go ringing thro' the land; it stirred his heart;
He heard the convent bells, cathedral chimes,
The blare and brawn, the clash of city mart.

V.

This is the dream he dreamed, the tale
His seeing eye read clear in ev'ry strain
Of vagrant winds, in ev'ry sigh or wail,
In rustling leaf and ripple of the plain.
Sweetly the dreamer sleeps upon the height,
A height love-wrapt and bathed in silver mist;
Decked by the tender tears of gray twilight,
And oft by fleecy starlight soothed and kissed.
Over him lilts the wind and shines the moon,
Over him droops the wings of Goddess Past;
And the river chants and the song-birds croon
Of the dream he dreamed, realized at last.

VI.

Sleeping he dreams, and dreaming hears
The din, the clash and clamor so close by;

Nestled 'mid hills, a city that rears
Minaret, tower and steeple to the sky.
All thro' the day the factories' seething mart,
The chime of Angelus at nightfall, dim.
The stir, leap and throb of a mighty heart,
A city bearing his name, that honors him.
This is his dream, so strange, so true, so fair,
The dream of the wood in realistic truth;
He sleeps, and the winds sing to him fore'er,
This is the dream you dreamed, Dubuque.

VII.

City of happy homes and shrines and bowers,
Of halls far-famed, and life and strength untold,
City of long bright days and twilight hours,
Of everlasting hills and sunshine gold.
Perchance within the shadow of thy walls
Hunger and want with woe and strife are blent,
And wrong and grief may trespass in thy halls,
Still city of hills thou art magnificent.
Great in thy honored sons whose names appear
High on the college walls, and scrolls of state,
In classic abode, in peace and progress rare;
In brotherhood, harmony, and concord, great.
Grand in all these, but grander far, forsooth,
In the spires and glitt'ring crosses that proclaim
Thy faithfulness to the shepherds of thy youth,
Who built thee on a rock, nor built in vain.
Sunshine upon thy heights forever more;
Joy be thine, prosperity and truth;
Ideal of him who sleeps without thy door
And dreaming dreams of thee, peerless Dubuque.

Go Slow, My Feet, Go Slow.

The joys are mine, of summer time,—
The pleasure, gleam and glow ;
Fair warblers sing, and joy-bells ring ;—
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

Nature in green is wrapt, a queen,
The brooklets, purling, flow,
And blue o'erhead the skies are spread ;—
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

The world all round with flow'rs is bound,
The winds chant soft and low,
What joy supreme ! what bliss serene !—
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

Too soon, alas ! will summer pass,
Too soon will winter's snow
Glisten and gleam where flow'rs did dream ;—
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

Too soon will fade from nook and shade
The comrades I love so ;
And clouds on high will dark the sky ;—
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

O thought forlorn, too soon life's morn
Will lose its gleam and glow ;
Then storms will reign, of grief and pain ;
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

'Tis then this heart will feel the smart
Of chilling winds that blow,
And sorrow's sway will dim my way ;
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

O, summer, stay with me, I pray,—
How fast the moments go!
Go slow, heart mine, go slow, old time;
Go slow, my feet, go slow.

Night.

Fair nature sleeps and o'er her downy couch
The Mistress Night faithful love vigils keep;
While vagrant winds, like pirate ships of old,
Roam back and forth across the trackless deep.
The crystal dewdrops, iridescent gleam,
The humid air with fragrance is replete,
Silence prevails so tragical and tense
That one can almost count the flow'r hearts beat.

The peace of God is brooding o'er the world
Like benediction after vesper hymn;
The voice of earth is hushed in sweet repose,
And ev'ry heart is filled with love of Him.
Far off a tremor seems to shake the stars,
A breath of air full-fraught with sweet incense,
A whir of passing wings, invisible,
And then a space of mystery intense.

Perchance it is the upward flight of souls
Gliding among the wheeling orbs sublime,
Unto the opened gates, whence comes that breath
Of incense sweet, that peace of God divine.

Today.

Of old, O people, you worshipped the Christ
Who died on the Sacred Tree;
Of old you adored the Nazareth King
Who poured out His blood for thee.

Of old you have prayed and sang at His feet,
Laid down your gifts at His throne;
You asked for His love, and gave Him your love,
Then He was your God alone.

You read of the pangs and pain He endured
That you might dwell up above;
And often you mourned and bitterly wept
At the thought of the stricken Dove.

For then was the time your hearts were warm
And true to the very core;
But this is the age of "progress" and "science,"
And Christ is your God no more.

You who have prayed ev'ry prayer in your hearts,
Gave ev'ry gift you could claim,
No longer look up to His kindly face,
No longer mention that Name.

And you say, "Why should we still cling unto
The God of the days of yore,
We've Bacchus, Venus and Mammon today,
And what need have we of more?

Of old, O people, you worshipped the Christ,
The Holy, the Pure and Bright;
Today, O people, you worship the gods
Of lust and greed and unright.

Of old you were kept to the clean, white ways
Of righteousness, joy and peace;
Today you are loosened as animals
To roam, to revel and feast.

For Mammon has sated your avarice,
And Venus your passion fed,
And Bacchus has smiled and oft you have sipped
At his table the wine, rich and red.

You have bartered your souls to heap up gold,
But treasures that you forgot,
Luxury, revel and wealth you may have,
But joy and peace you have not.

And what of the Christ who suffered and died,
The God you have known of old,
Before you gave way to passion's desire
And to the mad thirst for gold?

Think not He sleeps, or that justice is mute,
Well shrink you before His rage,
For God still is God, and you still fools,
The fools of a maddened age.

Day-Dreams.

Though wisdom points the hand of biting scorn,
And calls thee idle vag'ries, thieves of time;
Though heartless fate crushes my ev'ry hope,
Still will I cling to thee, day-dreams of mine.

I do not know if what they say be true,
That ye are false and fickle as the wind;
I do not know, but unto me it seems
That fate is cruel and you alone are kind.

For this I know, when life is dark and drear,
And when my heart is lonely and so sad,
Ye come, hope-winged, and show me future paths
Bedecked with dewy flow'rs, and I am glad.

Inspiration.

At dead of night, while still I weary toiled,
Taxing my brain 'till, rebel-like, it fought ;
Despair was settling o'er me like a pall,
When suddenly, far down the hall of thought,
I heard in dreamy mood a low, sweet voice,
A voice that, ever nearing, louder grew ;
Spell-bound I listened, half in hope and fear
That deepened as that voice e'er nearer drew.

Soon, like a fleecy cloud, a gauzy veil
Of incense, rich, sweet-smelling, filled the air;
A ghostly hand brushed swift across my brow,
And then it fled away, I know not where.
A ghostly touch, it set my soul on fire
And charged my blood with force, with power and might,
Deep down in my brain strange forms found birth,
Strange forms that whirled around me in the night.

I felt a thrill, unhuman, stir my being ;
No other joy shall e'er as joyous be ;
The harpstrings of my soul vibrated, glad,
A rush of heav'n-born light, and then, ah me !
I who in the still watches of the night
Had sought in hopelessness, despair and grief
In vain, to cull from thistle groves one flower,
From desert sands the rarest fruit to reap—

Seized the idle pen, in frenzied passion wrote
In words the living thoughts, the sacred strains,
That welled up from the fountains of my soul ;
Wrote until the radiant, roseate flames
Of palid day flashed on the cold, grey world ;
Then, only then, I dropped the trusty pen,

And, weary, read what hastily I wrote,
The magic words,—it dawned upon me then
As daylight dawned, as darkness flitted past,
When the world of toil rose up from tranquil rest ;
Dawned upon me as the daylight on the world,
That Inspiration, unknown, had been my guest.

Sympathy.

Before, I had thought her cold and proud,
I shunned her companionship, but now
I haste to clasp, in mine, the trembling hands,
I stoop to press a kiss upon her brow.

And murmur sweetest words of sympathy,
For I have suffered too, and well I know
How all her life is changed to blackest night,
How all her soul is steeped in bitter woe.

Ah, yes! her heart, like mine, has felt the pangs
Of parting pain, has knelt in grief beside
A coffined form, has kissed the cold dead lips
Of one who had been all her joy and pride.

She, too, has watched that still form borne away,
Has watched all hope, all happiness ebb slow
From out her heart, and leave it lone,—
Ah, yes! I too have suffered and I know.

Before, I thought her proud, but now it seems
Our suffering hearts beat as in unison;
The past is gone, tonight we two are friends,
A common grief and care has made us one.

The Poets.

Some lure us up to lofty mountain peaks,
    Where angels come to rest in passing flight,
Where incense-laden winds delicious roam
    And voices of Heav'n heard when all is quiet.

Some call us down the shadow-dappled vale,
    Haunted by grief, with dewy tears bestrewn;
And others teach our wayward feet to tread
    The calm white roads to peace, life's sweetest boon.

Some shake our souls with royal pomp and pride,
    Some thrill our hearts with battle's martial strain,
Some quench the smold'ring flames of wrath and rage
    And light the fire of genius in our brain.

Some lure us down the flow'r fringed dells of June,
    And bind us with the poppies' drowsy thrall;
Some make us laugh, some cause our tears to flow,
    And yet, our hearts revere and love them all.

Ballade.

Ah, heart of mine, I wish I knew
    Where the gods, superfluous,
Where nymphs and fairies hastened to
    When they fled away from us.
No more Olympus knows the rush
    Of white wings 'neath Grecian skies,
No more those voices tremulous
    Are heard where lonely Hellas lies.

Where are the troubadours, so true,
And the knights all chivalrous?
Where are the bards whose names live thro'
Lapse of time and tide and crush?
Where are the monarchs, false and flush,
Warriors in their iron guise,
Where are the women of the blush,
Or the maidens with down-cast eyes?

Where are the cities that once grew
Apace with progress marvelous,
Ninevah, Tyre, and Babylon, too?
Lo! they've crumbled into dust.
Nothing on earth is left for us
But to vent our woe in sighs;
Nothing of romance but a crust,
Nothing in life but realities.

Tell me, my friend, your pinings hush,
Not for gods I care, all-wise,
But where are the women of the blush,
And the maidens with down-cast eyes.

The Coming of Summer.

"Where is Summer, is she coming!"
Cries the longing, waiting earth;
And all life with joy is humming,
While each heart beats high with mirth.
Impatiently we wait the hour
When her loving form appears,
When her graceful footsteps echo
And fall on the list'ning ears.

Waiting stand the green-clad maples
In an attitude erect ;
From their branches float the song-notes
And the hum of each insect.
Waiting are the drooping willows,
Glist'ning 'neath the burning sun
Silent stand the ancient oak trees
Waiting for the queen to come.

'Mong the beds of fragrant flowers
Softly sounds the wild bee's hum ;
Thro' the green and leafy tree-tops
Breaths of southern breezes come.
In the dark and flow'r-gemmed forest,
Low the violet hangs its head,
Patient, waiting for her coming,
List'ning for her gentle tread.

I among those anxious comrades
Watch and wait with silent fears ;
When among the dewy verdure,
Lo ! her magic form appears.
And I dream of Summer's beauty,
Of the fields of golden grain,
Cornfields tossing in the sunlight,
And the reapers' dulcet strain.

Of the green and rip'ning apples
Hanging from the sturdy boughs,
Of the cattle grazing quietly
On the hillside's dark green brows.
Of the rolling, sea-like hayfields,
Shining with the ev'ning dew,
When the day is swiftly dying
And the red has tinged the blue.

Of the sweet and fragrant roses
That fair Summer brings, I dream ;
Of the notes of busy songsters
And the ripple of the stream ;
And I think with delectation,
As I stroll thro' leafy ways,
What joy and happiness it is
To live those bright June days.

A God Hath Died for Thee.

Thou art so long inured to wicked ways,
So steeped in shame, iniquity and crime,
That Nature with true hand upon thy face
And in thy deep set eyes has writ a sign
So deeply carved that time can ne'er erase,
A danger signal for all men to see;
Branded as one to be despised, and yet
A God hath died for thee.

Slinking along with lowered, drooping head,
Thro' the long corridors of dark and gloom;
You who have made of human souls a prey,
You who have dragged down virtue to its doom.
No sin thou'st left unsinned or law unbroke,
No depths left unexplored, and yet, ah me!
They say, and who shall say it be not true,
A God hath died for thee.

Here in this prison world's relentless walls,
Its iron-barred cells and brooding sense of crime;
Where vengeance-seeking ghosts and pale remorse
Stalk heavily thro' the halls in step with time.

Look far ahead the shades of blackness loom,
What gift can future years on thee endow?
Silence that speaks, despair too deep for hope,
A garb of sin and shame, a branded brow.

Think sin-calloused heart of thy boyhood's dream;
Where is thy manhood's worth and purity?
Where is the mother's prayer, the hopes she built?
Where is that grand ideal you meant to be?
Think, crime-soaked, sodden brain, if yet there is
Of light one single solitary ray;
You who have schemed so oft—what now, what now,
What gleam of joy is left for you today?

What now is left for you of branded brow,
You who to depths of infamy so fell?
What is there left for you but hopeless death,
Death and the awful flames and fires of hell?
What else is left, what else is left for you?
And yet, some how, it seemeth unto me
There must be hope and rescue at the last,
Since God hath died for thee.

After the Shower.

Far in the north the white clouds scud away
Like sails en route to some far foreign shore,
Sending a fond farewell, a last "good-bye"
Back o'er the foaming waves—the cannon's roar.
Forth from his purple prison leaps the sun
And beams upon the world with frownless face;
And soon the rain-soaked hills and submerged vales
Are steaming 'neath his steady, earnest rays.

The swallow, from the shelter of the eaves;
Soars thro' the refreshed air with eager glee ;
And from the vines that trail far up the oak
A robin chants a solo merrily.
The forests, like Golconda's mines, are rich
With jewels of ev'ry color, shape and size ;
But ev'ry lazy wind that wanders by
Snatches with greedy hands some of the prize.
The rose that drooped beside the garden wall
And bent beneath the heavy, straight downpour,
Has raised her head to greet that placid sky,
Far brighter and happier than before.

The Prodigals.

They have wandered away,
They have followed the ray,
The gleam of a fleeting star;
Far out where the pale grey
King of mis'ry holds sway,
And where life's great heart-breaks are,

They have hearkened, it seems,
To wild thoughts and mad schemes
Till their vein-blood caught afire;
Or they listed to dreams
That lured them down streams
Where they were lost in the mire.

O, how often we hear,
From our ways clean and clear,
Wild laughter, a moan or a sigh;
And we shed not a tear,
But we snicker and sneer,
'Tis well, let them die, let them die.

But what know we of them,
And how dare we condemn
They, who walk in gloom of night;
We, who know not what pow'r
In a weak, weary hour,
Hath lured them from ways of right.

O, we know not the bane,
Or the burden of shame,
Or how oft their scarred hearts yearn;
O, we know not how fain
They would cry in their pain,
Help, help us, God, to return.

Our Joys and Gifts.

Who asks for deeper joys than these?
The sun and sky, the flowers and trees,
The fragrant scent of clover seas,
The varied notes of birds and bees.
And lilt and toss of summer breeze,
Who asks for deeper joys than these?

Who asks for greater gifts than these,
A happy heart and mind at ease,
And love of God who oversees
Our ev'ry want, tends to our pleas,
And leads us safe o'er stormy seas,
Who asks for greater gifts than these?

What the Poet Knows.

The poet knows where Darkness goes
When from earth it flits 'way,
Where the shadow falls of its palace walls,
Beyond the realm of Day.

He knows how deep the seasons' sleep,
Of nature's mother love,
Each tiny beat of the flower-hearts sweet,
The call of dove to dove.

Of day's swift hush, and timid blush,
The fleeting steps of night,
Of the moonlight beams and starry gleams,
The fleecy cloudlet's flight.

He knoweth, too, why tears of dew
Gleam oft in twilight's eyes,
Each woe and grief of the flower and leaf,
The shore's forsaken cries.

He knows the lone lament and groan
Of winter's empty nest,
The mournful tale that night winds wail,
The sea-song of unrest.

The poet knows of human woes,
How high the tidal wave
Of fierce passion rolls within human souls
How high life's storms may rave.

He knows how care the heart-strings wear,
The joy, yet pain, of love,
How selfish or how low, our thoughts may go,
Or else how high above.

And so he sings of all these things :—
Of beauty, sorrow, love,
Ambition's fires and high desires,
Of blissful realms above.

And from this store of nature lore,
This wealth of hoarded gold,
He inspires in truth the hot blood of youth,
Makes glad the heart of old.

Artists' Souls.

Somewhere between the worlds there is a world
That whirls unseen, unrecorded by men,
Only the Great Creator knows in what part
Of that vast sea above, complex and dim,
It runs its course; in an hour inspired 'twas wrought,
As a pure receptacle, where heaven's thought
Should be congealed into white artists' souls,
Holy as heav'n, as tender and divine,
Fairer than all the other souls of earth,
More passionate, beauty-loving and sublime;
Of heav'n-born they see beyond earth's paltry gleam,
Hear songs we hear not, dream dreams we dare not dream.

Whom the World Rejects.

How smiles the world upon the fool who jests,
On those who laugh and cater to her pride,
Rewards with lavish hand her flatterers,
Enriches those who linger at her side.
How laughs the world, abderian-like, with those
Who scorn the thrall of precept and who drain
The chalice of pleasure to the dregs thrice o'er,
World-votaries who follow in pride's train.

How frowns the world on him who seeks to raise
Downfallen virtue to its native height;
How scorns the heel that crushes serpent heads
The strong white hand that upholds truth and right.
Ah, yes, she gives her smiles in opulence,
Riches, profuse, to flatterer and slave,
Reserves her hate for moralist and priest,
For those who teach and those who seek to save.

How has the world forgotten Him, Whose Voice
Has but to speak and wind and wave obey;
How has the world forgotten Him, Who smote
Sodom and Gomorrah to death, one day.
He, Who brought forth with mere power of tongue
Mankind, all living creatures from a clod;
How has the world forgotten Him, Who rules,
How has the world forgot its Master, God.

Out of the Night.

Out in the still dreary blackness
Of the lone midnight hour I heard
A voice in the low wind singing,
And the depths of my heart were stirred.

All day in my toil I'd pondered,
Perplexed o'er the problems of life,—
The mystery of care and sorrow,
Over wrongs, oppression and strife.

Why is it, I cried in my yearning,
In a world by a just God wrought,
The lives of the good and righteous
With woe and suffering are fraught;

While the lives of unjust and evil
Seem painless and happy and free,
Devoid of all care and crosses,
All peace and happiness seem to be?

O, why must the righteous suffer?
And all vainly my frail heart strove
To find one gleam in the darkness,
Pierce thro' the thick cloud-walls above.

And now, when the day is over,
Night broods o'er the land, the sea,
A voice in the wind is calling,
And whispering these words unto me :—

" Bear up, O heart, and despair not
Tho' sorrow come to thee, be still ;
Join me tonight on a journey
Down the centuries past until

We come to a hill on whose summit
The cross of all crosses, bright gleams,
Behold, on it hangs a victim
His life-blood is flowing in streams."

" Bow down 'fore that cross, O ingrate,
'Tis the God of angels and men,
Who suffers for you,—His faithful
Should be proud to suffer for Him."

" Since, for your sake, on dark Calv'ry
The passion and pain He hath stood,
Suffer, and help your Redeemer
To bear mankind's ingratitude."

Sonnet.

Friendship is to love, as water to wine,
One soothes the wounds of woe and gently heals
All care; happy. indeed, is he who steals
From its cool depths a draught for joy divine,
And strength is his that stands all tests of time.
But, ah! for him who in his life-blood feels
The crimson liquor's heat, who blinded reels
Altern, thro' joy and tears, clouds and sunshine,

He knows the bliss of earth's lost paradise,
The fire of hell, its fury and red heat,
And yet a very heaven round him lies—
The earth—and all whirls conquered at his feet.
Love is impulsive, friendship cool and wise,
Love old and yet new, half bitter and half sweet.

Caprice of Genius.

One still, dark night, some hours before the dawn,
Thro' the deep thickets of the upper world
The long bright wings of genius flashed unfurled,
And circled over earth, looked down upon
Millions of slumb'ring creatures here below,
On faces calm, firm and intelligent,
Some ignorant, ambitious, and all content;
Sleeping they dreamed of genius; could they know

How near he hovered, how many a hand
Would be outstretched to capture and to hold
This spirit of caprice, with wings of gold;
But on he swept above the sweeps of land,
Over many a heart that worshipped him,
By many a palace and college where
Skillful nets were carefully laid to snare
Him as he passed; he only laughed at them

And hastened on unto a hovel low,
Where hunger and privation held their sway;
Where want was king and sorrow known alway,
And life a constant day of deepest woe.
And there he came to earth and rev'rently
Bent down to press a kiss, (then softly smiled,)
On the brow of a wretched, base-born child
That slept amid the rags contentedly.

Sonnet.

It slumbered in his heart for years :—
The poetry,—its words of fire ;
And slumbered yet, had not life's lyre
Been swept by bitter woe and tears ;
And evermore in hopes and fears
We hear him chant his wondrous songs,
So fraught with joy, to list'ning throngs,
And steeped with heav'n each heart that hears.
Such songs of hope, so pure and sweet,
Were never heard in life's great mart,
Had not the touch of sorrow deep
Dispelled life's dream ; the soul of Art
Had never beat had not stern grief
Unlocked the fountains of the heart.

The Valley.

Dear valley 'mid the hills, I loved you so,—
Your sweet tranquility and calm ;
I loved your evening peace and morning glow,
The chime of bells when day was gone.

My soul was permeated with the sense,
The rhapsody of rest's delight,
Afar from worldly strife and struggles tense
That thrive apace upon the height.

Within pastoral nooks, or 'long the stream
That ripples in thy heart all day,
I would be well content to stroll and dream
My life's slow-moving hours away.

Dear valley, forest-born and picturesque,
I love thee and wish with thee to stay,
But from the mountain height, from yonder peak,
An unknown voice lures me away.

All day bright wings have hovered up above,
And lights have shimmered brilliantly ;
All day strange hands have beckoned me to rove,
To climb the steep away from thee.

Dear valley 'mid the hills, farewell ; I go,—
I must obey that voice divine.
The calm content, the halcyon, sunny glow
Of peace shall never more be mine.

But I shall dream of thee when far away,
Of dawn and dusk and warm sunshine,
Of a rippling stream and meadows green,
Of homing birds and bells that chime.

Farewell, dear vale ; I give thy joy for care,
Thy calm for battle's bitter fray,
Thy blissful rest for strife ; tho' there should be
Dark death in this, I must away.

Life.

Hast thou not heard the scientist and the sage
Who roam tradition's track, scan Heaven's page,
Who dig and delve, lay bare the heart of things,
And stoop to question ev'ry plant that springs ;
Who sweat and toil with martyrism true,
Self-sufficient, all-wise, and mighty few?
Hast thou not heard of men who slave, forsooth,
To glean for us poor ignorant the truth?
Hast thou not heard their sophistries,

Vain cavilings of science, its fallacies?
They who would know how out of emptiness
And darkest night and space all fathomless,
Whence out of non-existence came this thing,
Mystic creation—Life; from what pure spring
Hast come, or was it by some inner power
It wrought itself in that far ancient hour?
Or else, was Heaven the prolific source,
And the God above the strong, life-giving force?

O, mighty men, they say that you are wise,
Perchance it is thy splendor that blinds thine eyes,
For we who are not famous plainly see
The things that are not manifest to thee.
We have not searched tradition's musty page,
We have not questioned science, inquired of sage;
Explored no nooks, have sought not here or there,
But in our hearts we found the answer there;
Yes, there, deep in the center of our being,
We found the path that leads, more felt than seen,
A path that spans all space, all things forsooth,
Unto Life's source, Eternal Life and Truth.

Spring.

O, let's laugh in glee,
For the streams are free;
Let's shout, for the songsters sing;
Aye, frolic and play,
Be glad while we may,
For the year, the year's at Spring.

Let us roam the dells
Where the wood nymph dwells,
And laugh, for the rose is red;

We'll sip its perfume,
We'll dance 'neath the moon,
Ere the summer time has fled.

Now comes Autumn's chill,
But let us laugh still,
Tho' the year's a lifeless thing ;
The rose in our veins
Still a blush red reigns,
And our hearts, our hearts are Spring.

A Leaf.

Only a dead leaf flutt'ring in the wind,
A sapless, senseless thing,
Driven down to the dust; ah, never mind,
It had its fling.

The summer long upon the topmost bough
It frolicked 'neath the sky ;
Danced briskly with the sun and wind, and now,
Now let it die.

Invocation.

Great Sun of the Eternal Day,
In Thy vast ecliptic moving on,
One boon of Thee I beg and pray :
When hope and trust are gone,
And on my weary head, bowed low,
Descends the storm-cloud's wrath,
Then, Light of darker worlds below
Gleam o'er my path.

Stars of the Peerless Firmament,
In Thy lesser Orbits moving on,
Thy splendor and Thy lustrous light
Reflected from the Greater Sun ;
When in the soul-glooms of despair
I grope, and stumble ev'ry step,
Then, Stars, from Thy celestial sphere,
Gleam o'er my path.

Solar System of Lights Divine,
Hope of the world's eternity,
Pow'rs of that realm unseen, unknown,
Judges of years that are to be,
When on my life's bright day falls low
The om'nous umbra of dark death,
Then, O then, heav'nly Galaxy,
Gleam o'er my path.

Autumn.

Long lines of blended gold and rose and green,
The rainbow hues of Autumn's languid reign,
Above, the opal sky, cloudless, serene,
And far unto the wood a sweep of plain.

Afar the shivering sea of beaten gold
Whose pearl-edged waves besiege the white-washed shore ;
Waves that reflect the sunset, fold on fold,
And answer back its gleam with gleams galore.

Long purple shadows troop across the world,
And deepen into black, white-edged, then fall
Into the hollow of the hills, where, curled
In tranquil sleep, dream flow'rs beyond recall.

Long rows of beryl and roseate ribbons gleam
Across the turquoise blue of western sky;
Like furnace fires across the gloom they stream
'Til in the treetops tremulous they die.

How like death torches they quiver and leap,
Or roses strewn around the dead day's bier;
Silence o'er all save the voice of the winds
Bemoaning the sad heart-break of the years.

Transmigration.

Only the soul of Springtime
In its flight to Summer's breast,
A whir of wings above us,
A gleam of light in the west.

The lapse of but a moment,
Yet Spring forever is gone,
Its dear form has departed,
Its soul with Summer lives on.

Transient soul of the seasons,
Of decades and centuries grey,
Pause in your transmigration,
Let Summer forever stay.

The Victory.

Within the fastness of my soul I fought
Life's stormy battles for many a long day;
There I struggled with enemies who sought
To rob me of peace, to steal my joy away.

Deep in those depths I battled all alone
For the world of my struggle never knew;
My face as calm, as passive as a stone
Revealed not the secret safe from view.

The world saw not the line of armored foes,
It heard not the bugle's battle cry or call.
Saw not the flashing bayonets deal their blows,
Saw not the fierce foemen fighting, reel and fall.

Long I toiled with my gleaming sword in hand
Thro' the conflict's smoke, thro' tumult, battle flame;
Now 'tis done, on the scene of war I stand
And gaze upon mine enemies, wounded and slain.

Victory is won, yet no cheers I hear,
But my heart beats all triumphant as I tread
Across the fields from smoke and flame now clear
To gather swords and bury all the dead.

In Every Life.

Across the broad white page of life, sublime,
An ominous shadow quivering falls,
A shadow dense, that deepens and appals
And darker grows as onward rolleth time;
Shadow of a cross on a hill divine,
Of a Calvary awful, lone and drear,
Dark as Egyptian night and full of fear,
And in its sky no stars of courage shine.
A cross on which once in our lives we die
But rise again in glory, happiness,
While in the dark sepulcher silent lie
Forever dead our thoughts of selfishness;
Stifled fore'er the soul's repining sigh,
We rise again to labor and to bless.

Maternity.

She comes, the Angel Spring; a graceful hand
Is spread in benediction o'er the land;
And, lo! the barren mother smiles thro' tears
Upon her newborn children, and she hears
Their voices in the laughing stream set free,
Daedalion notes, the south wind's melody.

And her great heart grows warm with mother-love,
As with maternal care she bends above
Many a tiny crib and green fringed cot
In solitude unseen, but not forgot;
Where little hearts pulsate with new found life
And eyes just oped blink helpless in the light;

From couch to couch she flits with restless tread,
And dreams not of the children long since dead;
Gone are the lines of care from cheek and brow,
The falt'ring step is quick and fearless now;
Behold her waving tresses of fair hair,
No hint of last year's snow is hidden there.

See in the depths of her once mournful eyes
The joy of young motherhood leaps and dies;
The transient spring has swiftly come and gone,
But, lo, the mother's children still live on.
Rejoice, O throbbing earth, rejoice to see
The joys thy toil and travails brought to thee:—

Sweet flow'r forms, half human, half divine,
That cling to thee; whose waxen fingers twine
Around thy heart, and eyes of lustrous depths
That gaze at thee, the warmth of perfumed breaths
Across thy brow; the touch of lips that press
Thine own with childhood's love and trustfulness.

And all the night and all the glad spring day,
You hear them sing and prattle, hear them say:
" Mother, where art thou ; mother, come to me."
Rejoice, O Earth, in thy maternity.

The Forsaken Shore.

Tired and world-weary, forsaken shore,
I come to while away the hours with thee,
To cheer thy heart and watch the stately ships,
White-winged, sail o'er the opalescent sea;
Far out the careless wavelets skip and play,
The while they mock thy plaintive calls of woe;
To other shores more newly sweet and wild
They journey, leaping, laughing as they go.

What reck they of pain their absence brings thee,
They have forgot the hours wherein ye played;
Heartless, yes, as old friends sometimes are,
So has it been since this old world was made.
Since time began, friends have proved faithless
And mother hearts have yearned and sighed in vain,
But always comes a time when wanderers.
Repentant, seek the dear home love again.

So still thy sad moan, dear shore, heart lone,
For when the day of toil and strife is done
And far beyond the portals of the west
Sinks the last bright vestige of the sun,
Then tired of their constant revels and mad play,
Wearied by their long journey, fruitless quest,
The waves repentant will return to thee,
Return unto thy arms to dream and rest.

Summer.

Across the world's great lyre has swept
A quav'ring chord of sweetest melody;
A paen for Summer's longed-for birth ;
But for the passing Spring no threnody
Is trilled ; for in our transient joy
New found, no note of grief or care shall ring,
Nor pain, for richer days are ours.
Arise, my heart, arise ; be glad and sing ;
For on yon horizon bright,
Regal and fair, in royal robes of state,
Surrounded by courtiers, she comes,
Goddess trancendent, on whose will we wait.

Reward Divine.

The harpstrings of her soul had thrilled
With faith's sweet melody divine ;
Her lips had breathed its prayers and hymns,
Its doctrines stern, its truths sublime.
Her youthful heart had felt the pangs
Of earthly care ; her shoulder knew
A heavy cross ; the clouds were dark,
But hope's bright star shone ever thro'.

Her heart had pained with sorrow 'tense,
Had flamed and burned with wrath and hate,
But not for long, for none could dare
Usurp the home of firm, true faith.
The fountains of her soul had filled
With joy and gladness ; she had known
Ambition's fire, the call of fame,
And thro' it all she walked alone.

For, tho' her life had known most things,
Both sad and glad, sent from above,
Yet never had her heart been thrilled
Or stirred or waked with human love.
But on a day she knelt alone
Within the chapel, wrapt in prayer,
She softly heard, as in a dream,
A voice from heaven fill the air.

"My child," and in her heart she felt
Sink deep the words of Him so blest;
"I have sent crosses, trials and pain;
All patiently you bore the test.
Long have you waited for that gift,
Sweetest of all my hands bestow,
And now I give, but not of earth,
For love divine your heart shall know."

E'en as she heard she felt her soul
Swell with the plenteous reward;
And bowing low, humble, replied
In gratitude, "I thank Thee, Lord."
The voice was hushed, yet still she knelt
Thro' the long hours in silent prayer,
And when she rose her shining face
Proclaimed the love that rested there.

Now 'midst His chosen ones she walks,
Clad in the robes His beloved wear,
Toils in the vineyard of her Lord,
Bringing lost souls back to His care.
Forever wrapt in dreams of bliss,
She gladly serves her King above;
For she who knew life's cares before
Hath found all things are sweet in love.

Realization.

I saw your face once in a dream, long, long ago;
I saw it as tonight all smiling and aglow
With truth and tenderness, I saw your beaming eyes
As limpid, pure and bright as far off summer skies.

I felt the gleaming beauty of the night, supreme,
The mystery of the dark, the sunset's dying gleam;
And musingly I heard the wavelets rippling sing
Against the rocks, in the far off towers the church bells ring.

Within the liquid deeps of sky there was the glow
Of twinkling stars, in that old dream long, long ago;
'Twas but a dream, yet I saw the fleet shadows play,
Just as tonight, across your face then flit away;
The tremulous zephyrs caressed your broad, calm brow,
I heard your solemn pledge of friendship firm and now
Beneath the young moon's rich amorous rays I know
And realize that olden dream dreamt long ago.

Ah, yes, tonight I feel your loving hands in mine,
And deep within my heart I know that for all time
I have one friend to stand by me in weal or woe,
While stars come out and sunset light dies sure and slow.

Woodland Echoes.

Remote from that world where man's discordant voice
Controls life's tidal waves, all day I dream,
Deep in a realm where things are what they seem
I rove and revel 'mid rare Arcadian joys.
Sweet woodland comrades, afar from city noise,
Afar from blare and brawn and traffic's fray,
Fain with thee I'd be fore'er and aye,
Live with thee, and love with thee, with thee rejoice.

For in thy primal beauty and calm retreat,
And in the dulcet strains that you have sung,
I cannot trace the echo of deceit
As in the chattering of the human tongue.
For know the truest words men's lips repeat,
The truest that a mortal's lips can frame,
Within them course unseen, a hidden vein
Of treachery, of falsehood and of vile deceit.

So scorning the best that such as they can give,
And bidding their company farewell,
I betake me to the flow'r-damasked dell
Where all life's higher thoughts may thrive and live.

Faith.

When night broods o'er me, dark even as the tomb,
And somber clouds loom sullen-faced and gray,
It is the star that cleaves the purple gloom
And points the God-marked way.

And when the cross presses too heavily
And all my boasted strength and pow'r are gone,
It is the hand that's firmly clasped in mine
That helps me safely on.

And when my rebel heart would recreant turn
To go the roads of evil and unright,
It is the steel-barred gate that stays my step
And keeps me to the light.

Aye, Faith, thou art the upward lure that draws
Our souls to heaven with magnetic pow'r;
Soul-nectar, sweet indeed unto our lips,
Thou strength of death's dark hour.

Ballade.

You tell me as you serve the while,
A votary at fashion's shrine,
That to be pleasing and in style
You must not murmur once or pine,
But ever let your laughter chime
Above the others ringing high,
Drink deepest of the rich, red wine,
Laugh loudest where the others sigh.

O, search earth's ev'ry nook and isle
For pleasures, guiltless or malign.
What matters it if spiced with guile,
A little trickery or crime?
What matters if those hearts of thine
Should bleed, in anguish stricken lie?
Are you not fashion's children fine?
Shall you not laugh altho' you die?

Go tread, fair fools, your gaudy mile,
For Fashion's brow your laurels twine;
On her low altar heap and pile
The souls One meant to be divine.
But ask not this frail heart of mine,
That you have passed oft careless by,
To tread with you to pleasure's time;
You travel fast; I cannot fly.

Ah, yes, fair, jeweled friends of mine,
Too weak for you I fear am I,
For I must smile when my lips incline,
Must cry when I want to cry.

Leave the World a Little Better.

Leave the world a little better
With each setting of the sun ;
Whether 'tis a load you've lifted
Or a battle fought and won.
Whether 'tis a sin you've trampled
Or a height that you have scaled,
Leave the world a little better
When the light of day has failed.

Leave your mind a little richer
By some truth that you have gleaned,
By some lesson you have mastered
Or some dream that you have dreamed.
Leave some heart a wee bit gladder
By a smile that you bestowed ;
Leave some home more bright and cheerful,
And more smooth and clear some road.

Never let a day slip by you
Which bears not in letters deep
Some good deed as testimony
That you have not been asleep.

Leave the world a little better
When your life-work here is done,
Whether 'tis a picture painted
Or a song that you have sung.
When your life-work here is ended,
When its tasks are laid aside,
Leave the world a little better
For your having lived and died.

New Paths.

Strike out new paths into new lands,
New forests dark and dim ;
Drink from new founts, climb lofty mounts
Where man hath never been.

Tread dells no mortal trod before,
Dells with rare treasures strewn ;
Pluck wondrous flow'rs from hidden bowers,
And sip their sweet perfume.

Strike out new paths ; Alas! for him
Who is content to tread
The same old way, day after day,
Where millions trod who're dead.

Where Are the Stars Tonight?

Where are the gleaming stars tonight ;
The jewels of the sky?
I see no glimmer of their light
Shines from the courts on high.

The glow you see in the distance
Is but a city light ;
We want not the artificial ;
Where are the stars tonight?

The relentless clouds above us
In flight skim heedlessly ;
Perhaps they obscure the luster
Of the stars we long to see.

Where are the gleaming stars tonight,
That high and noble band?

No more their glory or their deeds
Illuminate the land.

O, where are the world's great masters;
Prophets sublime of old?
Tho' starlight still falls around us
'Tis not of purest gold.

O, tell me, ye clouds above us,
Will ne'er again the glow
Of heavenly stars delight us
Like those of long ago?

And tell me, O, tell me truly,
Clouds of greed and unright,
Do you account for the absence
Of those true stars tonight?

A Lonely Grave.

Swept by the soft and southern winds,
Caressed by the shadows grey,
Wept o'er by crystal dews of night,
Kissed by the sunbeams of day;
Under the shade of stately trees
So sturdy and stanch and brave,
Afar from the tumults of life,
There is a desolate grave.

Over that low, green mound the stars,
When all the world's asleep,
With faithful hearts and sleepless eyes
Their vigil of true love keep;
And whisper in tenderest tones
Prayers that stars only can pray,

While night weeps tears of glittering dew,
And the low wind chants alway.

The moon shines on the marble stone
That marks where a hero dreams;
Where e'er it falls like a flashing jew'l
The light of a dewdrop gleams;
The raindrops fall and autumn leaves
Are tossed in the blasts that rave,
And snows of winter wrap in white
The form of that lonely grave.

Thus ever and ever the years go by
With the changeless tide of time,
A lonely grave in the churchyard old,
And a grave in this heart of mine.

Pioneers

While battle fires were burning bright
On summit, primeval and crest,
The hardy pioneers built their homes
Amid the wildwoods of the west.

There in the depths of forests old,
'Spite of hardships and privation,
They founded in this unknown world
Homes, the strongholds of a nation.

Long since their toil has ceased in death,
Brave men of "ye olden days,"
But while we live America's sons
Shall give to them their love and praise,

Today 'midst all the peerless stars
In the world's vast constellation,
Our Country shines in bold relief
A great and all-honored nation.

Then in our songs of love and joy
In all our lusty vig'rous cheers
For heroes bold and warriors old
Let's not forget the brave pioneers.

An Aspiration.

Not on the mountain heights I long to sing
To royal throngs who tread the rose-fringed way,
But in the vale where unknown flowers spring
'Tis there that I would chant my humble lay.

Not to thrill the world with songs of power
With songs of war or battle's fierce behest;
But let me sing in the twilight hour
One hymn to lure the weary hearts to rest.

Not a people's homage, lauding voice,
But heartfelt gratitude, just this to gain,
And I forever more would glad rejoice,
O'er songs I had not sung or trilled in vain.

Not to praise the great or renowned my pen,
Or the exploits of heroes famed in lore;
But of the life lived flawless to the end,
Of this will I sing forever more.

Journey in Vain.

He journeyed afar to seek for fame,
For the glamor, gleam and glow
Of world's renown and an honored name,
For he scorned to walk below.
He journeyed for fame ; the road was long—
Many he met on the way :—
Peace, joy and content, and hope so strong ;
He passed them all in a day.

When in the twilight he still walked on;
Love softly came to implore,
He raised his staff and swift cried, "Begone."
Love fled to return no more.
Ah, yes ; he passed them all heedless by—
Life's joys and pleasures so bright.
Ahead, above in the future sky,
He saw the glow of fame's light ;
Its fickle rays lured him ever on
'Til the light grew dim and pale ;
He sought for fame, but the road was long,
And his strength began to fail.

He toiled for long, but, Alas! Alas!
The road to an ending came.
He toiled and struggled a whole life thro'
And found not name or fame.

So, tired in spirit, in body broke,
He turned his face and his step
To seek for one he had passed by—Hope—
And, lo! found disgrace and death.

Penitence.

Out of the darkness of this sable night
That looms around me near and far,
Jesus of Bethlehem, I cry to Thee,
Grant unto me, sweet Babe, one star,

To guide me 'cross the mist-wrapt dreary plain,
To lead me on past wood and wold
Unto Thy crib, as history relates,
Journeyed three royal Kings of old.

And tho' I bring with me no costly gifts
No gold or myrrh, no frankincense,
I bear with me a heart well filled with love
Of Thee, and humble penitence.

A Simple Life.

Seventy years of a useful life,
Of plebian toil and muscular strife;
Seventy years, lived day after day,
On the same old place, in the same old way.

Contented and glad, the whole year 'round
He tilled and toiled on his small plot of ground;
Mended the fences, kept off the weeds,
Gathered his harvest or planted the seeds;
Helped his neighbor with strong arm and sure,
All who came hungry, were fed at his door.

True he knew naught of pictures or books,
Save those that he read in skies and in brooks;
Beyond the vale where in youth he played,
His feet ne'er journeyed, his thoughts seldom strayed.

Unlearned in music, unlearned in art,
'Twas wonderful songs he heard in his heart.
Guiltless of life's shams and frauds and snares,
He prayed for all men each night in his prayers.

Seventy years lived day after day
On the same old place, in the same old way,
Making his garden, breaking the sod,
Loving his neighbor and praising his God.

Seventy years of a clean, white life,
Of plebian toil and muscular strife;
Untraveled, unlearned, yet who shall sneer
At the clean white life that has ended here?

Love.

The stars will beam again, just as tonight,
And be reflected in the crystal dew;
The world with wondrous splendor be bedight,
The skies above bend just as clear and blue.

The wind will chant again its lullabys,
The night be full of rapture and of bliss;
And many other harvest moons arise
As lustrous and as beautiful as this.

But ne'er again shall glimmering star or moon
Seem unto me so wonderfully bright;
Never again in all life's plenilune
Shall my heart know a fairer, sweeter night.

Our hearts will beat again, just as tonight,
With joy new born; our kindred souls will soar
Above the things of earth; our eyes will see
A glimpse of perfectness; but nevermore

Shall such excessive happiness be ours,
Or shall our souls be borne so far above;
But once in life we taste of heav'n; 'tis when
First we know the sacred joy of love.

If Souls Return.

Soul of my soul! tho' death has reft the chains
That bound our faithful hearts as one,
Tho' naught of me but lifeless clay remains,
Weep not, for, sweetheart, I shall come
Again to you, if true the saying be
That souls departed hover near;
Yea, I shall surely come unseen to you,
Shall guard you from life's harm and fear.

When the red dawn flow'rs forth within the east,
Enmeshed within its beams I'll hide
And linger at your window lovingly,
Glad and content and satisfied;
And when you smiling come, deep in the strands
Of your gold hair I'll rest and trace
Each perfect curve, each dimple madd'ning sweet,
And the flawless contour of your face.

And I will kiss your lips, caress your brow,
Gaze into your eyes yearning and sad,
And reading there your love still true to me
Will flit away content and glad.

And when the grey, star-spangled twilight comes
And draws its bourneless curtains low;
When earth is tender with tears of dew,
Then, darling mine, be sure to go

Down to the rippling fount where oft of old
We two kept tryst;—I'll speak to thee
In ev'ry murmur of the winds and leaves,
In every sob of the sea.

Good-Bye.

'Twas long ago, upon a night like this,
A night all wrapt in tender memory;
We stood beside the little garden gate
And watched the darkness fall upon the sea;
We heard the dreamy tinkling of the bells
Slow swinging in the far-off woodland dells.

You said, "Good-bye," just as the first faint star
Gleamed from the heavens, half azure, half grey.
I clasped your hand with heart too full for words,
And you went down the violet bordered way;
I bent my head to murmur low one prayer,
And "God be with you," floated on the air.

Your footsteps rang against the gravel walk,
I heard you whistle gaily an old tune;
We lltle knew the parting was for e'er
Alas! for me, I found it out too soon.
There was no sign then writ on earth or sky
To tell my heart it was the last good-bye.

And yet it seemed a strange, sad meaning clung
Unto the words, so careless yet so sweet,
That filled my soul with strange presentiment,
That caused my heart to faster throb and beat;
But heedless you went down the dusky row
Of poplar trees that wavered to and fro.

Long after in the rose-gold light I leaned
Upon the slanting gate, and strove to hear
Your last faint footfall echo die away,
The last glimpse of your figure disappear,
And when I could not hear or see you more
I passed up the narrow pathway to the door.

'Twas long ago, but many nights since then
I've stood beside that gate and watched the gleam
Of sunset die beyond the shining sea—
Have lived that parting o'er as in a dream.
Yes, there I've stood and watched your form depart,
" Good-bye " still thrilling softly in my heart.

A World of My Own.

O, I have a world of my own,
A world I have carved from my brain ;
Like a royal queen on her throne
In the midst of my kingdom I reign.
O, the sun shines so brightly all day,
And the clouds, O the clouds never loom,
And always the birds are singing,
And 'tis always the month of June.

Its plains are so level and green,
Its mountains colossal and high,
And its rivers so clear and bright
They dazzle the on-looker's eye.
The woodlands are full of cool springs,
Of plants, trees and leafy bowers ;
In every nook the song-bird sings,
The roadways are lined with flow'rs.

O, I have a world of my own,
A world I have peopled with men
Who're brave as chivalrous knights of old,
Strong muscled and mighty of limb.
True men of great hearts and great minds,
Whose love is untarnished and pure,
Willing to die for the right,
Steadfast in their faith, and secure.

A world where the women are fair
And blushing and sweet as the rose;
A world where the maidens are pure
And meek as the lily that grows;
A world I have dotted with homes
Where happiness reigns all supreme,
Where peace presides all undisturbed,
And love is sole ruler and queen.

O, not in a prosaic sphere,
O, not in the tumult and strife,
But in a dream world of my own,
Contented I live out my life.
Not where the dark figures of greed
Or hate or dishonor doth reign ;
'Tis a jolly old world of my own,
A world I have carved from my brain.

At the Cross-Roads.

O, somewhere a voice is calling to me ;
It rings in the forest, wails in the sea ;
Somewhere, but, soul of mine, where can it be?

I can hear it all day, like the call of a dove,
Invisibly drifting, now here and now there,

Afar on the hilltop, in valley or grove,
'Til it seems to be echoing everywhere;
Half-pleading, half-luring, it persuades my soul
To hark to its summons, to hasten away ;
And so thro' the woodland's dark thickets I roam,
In the gold mists of morn and the brightness of day.

O, somewhere a voice is calling to me;
It rings in the forest, wails in the sea ;
Somewhere, but, soul of mine, where can it be?

All the night, when the surges are lapping the shore
And the wanton wind dissipates in the pines,
I start from the meshes of shadowy dreams
To hear indistinctly down the tall, ghostly lines
Of silvery-leafed poplars that voice, vague and low,
A-touching and thrilling my heart's ev'ry chord.
It melts me to tears or o'erwhelms me with joy,
And sometimes, O often, it thrusts sharp like a sword.

O, somewhere a voice is calling to me ;
It rings in the forest, wails in the sea ;
Soul of mine, soul of mine, what can it be?

O, ye dreams I have dreamed, are you calling me back ?
O, you loved, now dead in eternity,
Somewhere in the shadows and mists all around,
Speak quickly and tell me, if it is destiny.
Is it a saddened call from the way I have lost?
The way of the cross, that my feet should have trod?
Is it love, hope or sorrow, contentment or hate?
And I trembled to think, but perhaps it is God.

O, somewhere a voice is calling to me ;
It rings in the forest, wails in the sea ;
Soul of mine, soul of mine, what can it be?

O, you who have once stood at the cross-roads of life,
O tell me if you have half-dreamily heard
Somewhere, afar off o'er the white, winding lanes,
A voice, strangely limpid, whose every note stirred
Ev'ry chord in your heart, ev'ry wave in your soul,
And filled your heart-blood with a strong, quenchless flame,
And if you have heard it, perhaps you can tell
Whence cometh that calling, from highway or lane.

O, somewhere a voice is calling to me;
It rings in the forest, wails on the sea;
Somewhere, but, soul of mine, where can it be?

Together.

Together we have smiled, have laughed and played
And danced with merriment in life's sweet spring;
Together watched the flowers flash from earth,
And heard the homing birds their first notes sing.
We've watched the opal skies grow deeper blue,
The streamlets burst their chains of ice and snow;
Together have endured all grief and pain,
All joy and mirth that childhood's heart can know.

Together summer hours we whiled away,
The long, delicious, drowsy days of June;
Have wandered 'neath its silent, lovely stars,
And watched the deep'ning luster of the moon.
We've known the zephyr's touch, the scorching blast;
Have plucked the rose and felt its stinging thorn;
Together we have gladdened 'neath the sun,
Together faced the fury of the storm.

And now the autumn comes and we are old
And tired with all our wondering and dreams;
The flow'rs are dead, the days are growing cold;
No longer on us falls the sun's warm beams.
The autumn-quiet is brooding over all;
Lone and sad the dells we roamed together,
Behind us lies the long and distant path
That we've trod in bright and stormy weather.

But, tho' the rose is dead, the rose we loved,
Tho' leaf and bud are withered, lifeless, dead;
Tho' birds no longer sing for our sweet joy,
And skies once bright are dark and grey o'erhead,
We are not sad, ah, no! our hearts are glad
As hand in hand again we quietly roam
Together down the rose-gold sunset lane
Whose windings lead to peace of God and home.

Steps on the Stairs.

Now some toil up unto the gleaming light,
Some sink into the depths of black despair;
How often in the stilly hours of night
We hear their footfalls on the winding stair.

With slow, sure step, with firm, metallic tread
That goes ringing thro' the night's solemn gloom,
The upward toilers strive, while far below
The millions hasten downward to their doom.

Alas! how much easier to descend
The great winding stairs of life,—to go down,—
Than it is to climb upward or ascend
Step by step to the winning of the crown.

Hear how patient the steps go up and up,
In the shadow of evil and unright,
Step after step each white and fearless face
Is stead'ly drawing nearer to the light.

Note, however, the downward troops increase
As eagerly they onward push and press;
What care they for the heights of joy or peace?
What care they for the things that cheer and bless?

Down, ever down, to where the caverns yawn,
Millions of footsteps echo day and night;
Down where their eyes will never see the dawn,
Down where their eyes will never see the light.

Alas! for the gleaming of sun-kissed heights,
For the upward lure of beauty or song;
Alas! for preacher and for moralist
Striving to conquer and subdue the wrong.

Alas! for the work of women and men!
Alas! for the prayers the goodly pray,
For the army still goes marching down to sin,
An army growing stronger day by day.

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